

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/648,317	KURODA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	John Ruggles	1756	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to the 2/20/07 amendment.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,3-6 and 15-18.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination (RCE) under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after allowance or after an Office action under *Ex Parte Quayle*, 25 USPQ 74, 453 O.G. 213 (Comm'r Pat. 1935). Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicants' RCE amendment submission filed on 2/20/07 has been entered.

In the current 2/20/07 RCE amendment, claims 1, 3-6, 16, and 18 remain as previously presented, claims 2 and 7-14 remain cancelled, and claims 15 and 17 are currently amended. Therefore, only claims 1, 3-6, and 15-18 (as currently amended) remain under consideration.

Applicants state on page 6 of the current submission in the remarks section that the original specification at paragraph [0036] shows support for the current amendment to the claims. This support is acknowledged in reference to instant Figure 1.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Steven Warner on 3/22/07.

Art Unit: 1756

The application has been amended as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS (as currently amended in the 2/20/07 RCE):

At claim 15 lines 5-6, change “first slit openings having two or more parallel slit openings” to --~~first slit openings having two or more parallel~~ first slit openings--.

At claim 17 line 10, change “second slit opening and the light shield portion” to --second slit opening [[and]] where it crosses the light shield portion--.

IN THE SPECIFICATION (as previously substituted on 11/14/05 and further changed by examiner’s amendment on 1/12/06):

Amend the previous 1/12/06 version of the abstract as follows: (1) *at lines 1-2*, change “A near-field photomask is made up of a light shield film and openings formed in the light shield.” to --A near-field photomask ~~is made up of~~ includes a light shield film [[and]] having openings ~~formed in the light shield~~ to constitute a light shield portion.-- and (2) *at line 5*, change “interlinking at least two of the rows of first slit openings.” to --interlinking at least two of the rows of first slit openings. A near-field exposure apparatus includes the near-field photomask with a positioning unit and a source for illuminating polarized light parallel to the first slit openings for forming a latent-dot-image on an exposure target only where a second slit opening crosses the light shield portion on the near-field photomask.--.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 3-6, and 15-18 are allowed.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John Ruggles whose telephone number is 571-272-1390. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mark Huff can be reached on 571-272-1385. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

jsr



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